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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2433

Oct. 20, 1989



JEANNE YEUTTER BECOMES TREE PLANTING VOLUNTEER -- Jeanne Yeutter, wife of Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter, salutes as she becomes the first volunteer in USDA's new "TREEmendous America" campaign to support tree-planting and reforestation. That's Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson standing next to Mrs. Yeutter and FS' Wayne Bell at the podium. "At our farm in Nebraska," she said, "we plant trees to commemorate special family occasions such as birthdays, weddings and anniversaries. I want to do my part to support tree planting now for the benefit of future generations of Americans." Contact: Susan Hess (202) 447-3760. (USDA Photo by Yuen-Gi Yee.)

HERBS TAKE OFF -- Newly released 1987 Census of Agriculture estimates reveal dramatic increases in U.S. herb farming. Acreage for most herbs increased 122 percent during 1982-87 and quantity harvested jumped 248 percent. California leads in garlic and parsley acreage, Florida has the most watercress acreage and Hawaii is the only U.S. producer of ginger root. Washington leads in dill acreage and Oregon has the most mint. USDA Contact: Cathy Greene (202) 786-1886.

NEW USE FOR OLD NEWSPAPERS -- It wasn't long ago when there was money in recycling newspaper. Now, it's hard to give the papers away. But, Joe Heimlich, a waste management specialist at Ohio State University, has a new use for old newspaper -- shred it and mix it with straw. Farmers can use the mixture as bedding to cut costs. Contact: Joe Heimlich (614) 292-2011.

BONSAI TREE SMUGGLER FINED \$10,000 -- A bonsai writer, teacher, lecturer and former bonsai society president has been sentenced to two \$5,000 fines and a year's probation for attempting to smuggle a number of bonsai trees into the United States. "This is the first time we've had a criminal conviction for plant smuggling," says James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "The bonsai trees could have introduced damaging insects or serious diseases of forest trees into the United States." USDA Contact: Margaret Webb (301) 436-6573.

MUNICIPAL YARD-WASTE COMPOST SAFE -- Cornell University engineers have found compost from yard waste -- composted in a 500-ton-per-year yard-waste composting project -- is safe from harmful levels of pesticides. Cornell economists have found the cost of composting is well below that of other disposal methods. The pilot project is believed to be the most comprehensive environmental monitoring program ever conducted with municipal composting. Contact: Roger Segelken (607) 255-9736.

GRANDMA WAS RIGHT -- Oatmeal is good for you, says Phil Bruckner, an agronomist at the University of Georgia. Oats actually provide one of the best packages of all-around nutrition of the cereal grains. Because the demand for oat products will continue to increase, the long-term outlook for oat prices and production is good, Bruckner says. Scientists at the University of Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station are working to develop high-yielding varieties that are cold-tolerant and disease resistant. Contact: Phil Bruckner (404) 542-3621.

IS IT 30 OR 50? It's great to know there are people who actually read the Farm Broadcasters Letter cover to cover and they call us when we make errors. Some of our sharp-eyed readers noticed we went from Letter No. 2429 on Sept. 22 to Letter No. 2450 on Sept. 29. Had it been a week later, we could have pleaded new fiscal year. Now all we can point to is sloppy typing and proofing. For those of you who care, today we return to Letter No. 2433, after publishing letters 2451 and 2452. Now, what do we do when we finally do get up to 2450?

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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1689 -- On this edition of Agriculture USA, Brenda Curtis goes back to her hometown of Westfield, N.Y., where she compares the grape harvest of 1949 to the 1989 harvest season. She talks with local grape growers about how the industry has changed and what's responsible for those changes. (Weekly reel--13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1171 -- Hurricane Hugo recovery; food safety concerns; putting variety in your diet; seafood inspection; a tree planting campaign. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1678 -- USDA News Highlights; rural community liability; cotton comments; screwworm eradication; concord grape harvest; mechanical harvester. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1242 -- Reducing cancer risk; cooked veggies; yeasty flavorings; new medicines from yeast; cheaper citric acid. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Oct. 31, crop/weather update, world cocoa, world tobacco, ag prices; Wed., Nov. 1, horticultural exports; Fri., Nov. 3, fruit outlook; Tues., Nov. 7, crop/weather update; Wed., Nov. 8, vegetable outlook; Thurs., Nov. 9, U.S. crop prod., USSR grain, world ag supply/demand.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.  
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

USDA TV NEWS SERVICE -- (Oct. 19, 21 & 23) -- Brian Norris reports on American exporters making a profitable business from selling eels overseas. Will Pemble has a story on research to detoxify pesticides using yeast. Lisa Telder reports on a new strain of disease-resistant chicken. USDA Meteorologist Ray Motha with a weather update; USDA Budget Officer Stephen Dewhurst explains the impact of budget cuts on agriculture; Vernon Morgan, Food & Nutrition Service, on aid to earthquake victims; Lester Crawford, Food Safety & Inspection Service administrator, on cattle inspection study; Bill Johnson, associate deputy administrator of the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, on cattle exports to Mexico.

UPCOMING STORIES: Western New York concord grape harvest; news from the pumpkin patch; dairy production; catfish farming.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY . . . . . 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D  
SATURDAY . . . . . 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D  
MONDAY . . . . . 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D  
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)



OFF MIKE

COTTON ... crop in the Texas plains seems about a third bad, a third good and a third undecided, says Bob Cockrum (Texas Agribusiness Net, Dallas). Weather will be the major deciding factor. Some cotton turned out well despite drought in the area. Pumpkin crop is another matter. An August hailstorm damaged vines preventing development. As time progressed farmers noted stunted growth. Production is down about 30 percent.

BIG ... season for pumpkins is upon us, Halloween and Thanksgiving. Rain this Spring in western New York heavily damaged the crop. But not to worry, Kansas and California producers report major improvements over last year's drought-reduced production.

HURRICANE ... Jerry didn't do cotton any good, says Doug Thomas (Progressive Farmer Network, Starkville, Miss.). Bolls exposed to rain develop spots, become less white, and bend to the ground affecting harvest. Soybean harvest is down about 30 percent.

## ***Farm Broadcasters Letter***



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JERRY'S ... rain didn't hurt the rice harvest, says Don Molino (Louisiana Agri-News Net, Baton Rouge). However soybean yields are down substantially, even lower than expected, because of excess moisture. Don says some producers who average 30 bushels only got three this season. Cotton yields are expected to be down about 15 percent in the region.

RECORD ... crop of sorghum is expected in Chuck Stark's (KGNO, Dodge City, Kans.) area. Freezing temperatures early this month burned the tops of some plants, even so, Chuck says its the best they've ever had. Dry conditions are helping the harvest but rain is needed for new wheat -- about 75 percent of which is up and growing. Meanwhile, feed lots are full and beef producers are getting good prices, \$71-72. That's a great way to have a growing season come to a close.



*Vic Powell*  
VIC POWELL  
Chief, Radio & TV Division